

# Sims Warns of Peril in Navy Conservatism

New Weapons and Methods of Warfare Must Be Adopted to Avert Disaster, He Tells War College Class

Other Powers More Alert

True "Safety First" Seen in Being First to Develop and Utilize Inventions

NEWPORT, R. I., Nov. 19.—(By Associated Press.)—Admiral William S. Sims, in his annual address as president of the Naval War College to its graduating class of officers to-day, discussed "Military Conservatism," referring, he said, specifically to that type and degree of conservatism "which has so often been responsible for defeat in battle, and sometimes for national disaster."

After quoting from history to show that there has always been resistance to new weapons or methods of warfare, he said: "The rapid development of the submarine and the airplane during the war, and the continuous development of both, and especially the latter, since the war, have shown that these powerful weapons are still in their infancy; that great possibilities of development are clearly in sight, and that it will require the most careful, devoted and logical consideration upon our part even to keep abreast of the developments in foreign navies much less to anticipate these developments."

Indisposition on the part of our navy at once to utilize new ideas, weapons and methods of demonstrated value, the admiral said, had been "due to a habit of mind that could be indulged in the past with comparative safety, but which is manifestly a danger to a country that has become involved in international politics, and whose policies are likely to be disputed by other powers."

**Must Utilize New Weapons**

Admiral Sims, asserting that our gunnery up to 1900 was so inefficient "that an equal force of ships of any navy could have inflicted upon us a most humiliating defeat," added "in my opinion we are now entering a period that may become still more dangerous if we fail correctly to interpret the significance of the rapid development of fundamentally new weapons of enormous destructive power and of relative immunity to effective resistance by any means except a decisive superiority of similar weapons."

"We may escape this danger in the future, as has so often been the case in the past, through the superior vision of a Roosevelt, or through the pressure of public opinion overcoming the excessive conservatism of military minds."

"I think it is apparent that the remedy we seek is comprised in a combination of logical ability and military character—the ability to reach sound conclusions from established facts, and the character to accept, adopt and fight for these conclusions against any material or spiritual forces."

"A navy to be successful must be guided not only by men of ability, but by men of intellect and honesty, that is, proof against personal ambition or any other influences whatsoever."

"Which of us will be quoted in future as examples of dangerous conservatism?"

"Ever since men first began to use weapons to fight each other," Admiral Sims said at the outset of his address, "military men have been reproached for excessive conservatism, a polite term often intended to imply a dangerous class reluctance to accept new ideas. Other professors could afford to be conservative without much danger to the country," he continued, "whereas, in the case of the military profession, national disaster might easily result from a lack of the vision necessary to recognize the superiority of a new weapon or a new method of warfare."

Their conservatism may be so dangerous that it is highly important that they should so train their minds logical thinking as to eliminate, or at least minimize, this danger."

**Navy Cool Toward Inventions**

"Inventors have always had a hard time in convincing high naval officials of the merits of their inventions," he went on. "It usually required the pressure of war necessity or strong political influence, or both, to insure even a hearing. Fulton and Ericsson are cases in point."

The introduction of armor was opposed very strenuously for many years. The long and costly controversy over the adoption of breech-loading guns is well known.

"During the lifetime of officers still living it may be said that navies have advanced from wood and sails to steel and steam."

"This rapid progress has, of course, tended to diminish conservatism as much in foreign navies as in ours; but the important question now is as to whether the training we are actually giving our officers is systematic, and logical thinking will enable our navy simply to adopt improvements after their value has been proved in foreign navies, but so to utilize our undoubted inventive ability, and so promptly to recognize demonstrated facts that we may keep safely in the van of progress, and thus eliminate the danger of being outclassed through the superior vision and alertness of possible enemies."

# Hughes and Aids Alone to Direct American Policy

Made Plain That Function of Naval Experts Is Principally That of Developing Facts for Delegates

Ship Ratio Chief Issue

Believed Japan's Stand Is Prompted Largely by Effect on Home Politics

WASHINGTON, Nov. 19. (By The Associated Press.)—Secretary Hughes and his associates of the American delegation have no intention of surrendering to the naval experts the formulation of any policies to guide American action in naval or other questions pertaining to the armament conference.

It was made plain to-day that the function of the experts was strictly that of developing the facts. Determination of policies upon those facts is the reserved right of the civilians who make up the American delegation.

Emphasis in this connection was laid to-day on the undesirability of diverting attention from the main issue of the American naval proposals, the capital ship ratio plan. All questions of proportions of auxiliary craft, the place of submarines in the scheme of curtailment and similar items are looked upon by the American delegation as of secondary importance.

**Japan Only Stumbling Block**

For this reason the American attitude of resolute adherence to the "five-five-three ratio" of the American capital ship plan has been emphasized.

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It is this main issue which is still to be met, together with the ten-year building holiday and a substantial immediate reduction in tonnage already afloat. The announced intention of the Japanese delegation to seek an alteration of the ratio, however, is the only known stumbling block to this first, vital agreement, so far as can be seen.

How far the work of the experts has cleared the way for that understanding it is difficult to say at the end of the first week of conference deliberations. The workings of the experts remains a mysterious, little known process to the world at large.

**Home Politics Involved**

In connection with the Japanese attitude, the impression appeared to gain ground to-day that Admiral Baron Kato, in announcing his purpose to seek a slightly higher tonnage ratio for Japan, was prompted to some extent by considerations involving home politics. It was hardly to be expected, some officers said in comment, that he could accept out of hand a definite relegation of Japan to the short end of the "five-five-three ratio" proposal without a fight. Japan was said always to have looked toward a ratio of 75 to 100 in naval strength, as compared to the United States.

How far Baron Kato is prepared to press that fight, however, and whether he does not already stand committed to the American program of maintaining a naval status quo between the two powers, a reduced scale, remains to be seen. There is nothing to indicate that success of the conference has in any way been jeopardized by any action yet taken by the Japanese delegates.

Influences are stirring beneath the surface of the conference which may soon bring the French and Italian navies prominently into the picture with those of Great Britain, Japan and the United States in the shaping of a program of reduction and limitation. It is now felt in some quarters that a beginning could be made on the purely European aspect of the naval problem, paralleling the larger discussion involving the Pacific naval forces chiefly.

In this connection the view is expressed in American circles that the United States, and probably Great Britain and Japan, would be entirely agreeable to any probable building program upon which, either France or Italy might wish to embark. It is realized that emergencies of the war compelled both nations to abandon their naval programs and turn naval facilities into munition plants for the armies. They have fallen far behind

# Wife Brings Offenders Into Husband's Court

BEACON, N. Y., Nov. 19.—Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Heeg, of Lagrange, Dutchess County, have a monopoly on the administration in their town. Mr. Heeg is justice of the peace and his wife has just qualified as constable, having been chosen to that office at the November election.

Mr. Heeg swears out the warrants and hands them to his wife, who, in turn, serves them and brings offenders before her husband's court or turns them over to him for delivery at the county jail.

holiday might not apply fully to these two powers.

The most difficult phase of the Franco-Italian naval question would be the establishment of a ratio of strength as between the two. It is said to be improbable that any of the other three powers would ease to make a suggestion on that point. As the two navies are not in the scale of large navies and the balance they maintain against each other is not a matter directly affecting the United States or Japan, and affecting Great Britain only to a slight degree, it seems to most officers that it might well be left to the naval experts of France and Italy to seek an agreement on this point between themselves.

In the event that no agreement could be reached by the French and Italian authorities, the time might come when they could seek the aid of the other three powers.

**Sun Causes Near-Panic**

A ray of sunlight flashing on the silvered screen in the Academy moving picture theater at 237 East Houston Street yesterday caused a small boy in the audience to shout "Fire!" The one hundred persons comprising the audience started for the various exits. Several men ran to different corners and turned in three separate

# Urges Aid for Red Cross

Charles W. Whittlesey, commander of the Lost Battalion and chairman of the roll call campaign of the New York County Chapter of the American Red Cross, announced last night that the organization intends to raise by Thanksgiving Day had been obtained and that it was up to the adults of New York to equal the record made by school children.

"The school children of the city," he said, "have come through without prompting or solicitation. Fifteen thousand of them on their own initiative have joined the Junior Red Cross for 1922. The pupils of twelve schools have made their own subscriptions and sent them to headquarters. The only reminder they have had that the roll call was on was the poster displayed in the city."

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